"In principle" approvals have been accorded for greenfield airports at Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, Mopa in Goa and Kannur in Kerala. A proposal received from Government of Uttar Pradesh for setting up of a greenfield airport at Jewar in Gautam Buddha Nagar District, is under consideration. Proposals of new airports at Hassan, Bijapur, Shimoga and Gulbarga in Karnataka are under process for "in principle" approval. Many State Governments have indicated that they are in the process of formulating proposals for several new airports.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been mandated to construct three new airports in the North-Eastern States.

Subsidies to BPL families

†*94. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that benefits of different kinds of subsidy being extended to Below Poverty Line families/consumers in the country is not reaching them;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to reconsider different kinds of subsidy being provided by Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: (a) the food subsidies are largely designed to be targeted to people Below the Poverty Line (BPL). The other two major subsidies, namely fertilizer and petroleum, particularly subsidy on LPG are available to all users/consumers. A study by Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of the Planning Commission regarding the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), which covered 18 states, reveals that though the offtake per household has shown improvement under TPDS, yet only about 57 per cent of the BPL households are covered by it. Further the report finds that only about 42 per cent of the subsidized grains issued from the Central Pool reaches the target group.

(b) and (c) Based on evaluation studies and feedback received from states, a nine-point action plan has been jointly formulated by the Central and State/UT Governments to strengthen the TPDS. These include regular reviews of the BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) lists to ensure coverage of eligible families, involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the public distribution system (PDS) operations, use of information technology, creating awareness among public about PDS operations, etc.

Mud clay pack treatment on Taj Mahal

*95. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has started the mud clay pack treatment on the Taj Mahal, which has become due now;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the cost involved and schedule date of completion of work;

(c) whether Government has made any feasibility study of some other countries to know the effectiveness of mud clay pack on the white marble;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) Yes Sir, Archaeological Survey of India has set up an air pollution laboratory at Taj Mahal, Agra which regularly monitors the air quality in the ambience of Taj Mahal since 1982. The average level of suspended particulate matter (SPM) Is five times higher than the permissible limit prescribed for monuments. This causes the yellowing of the marble surfaces, particularly in rain sheltered areas such as marble cladding in the arches/niches of main mausoleum, marble brackets etc.

The clay pack method is used for the scientific cleaning of marble surface in order to safely and effectively remove superficial accretions. It has been planned to take up the task of mud pack cleaning treatment in two phases. In the first phase of work, the arches including the marble screens and platform terrace walls of the monuments facing Yamuna has already been initiated and expected to be completed by second week of June, 2008 with an estimated cost of Rs. 14.00 lakhs. In the next phase the minarets will be taken up.

The treatment of marble surface of the Taj Mahal employing clay pack/mud pack treatment technique has been adopted since 1983-84. This technique is an internationally recognized method based on absorption principle. Fuller's Earth activated with certain suitable chemicals is used for this purpose. The marble surface to be cleaned is covered with a two millimeter thick layer of the paste of Fuller's Earth prepared in distilled water. The mud pack is covered with polythene sheets in order to allow sufficient time for action. When the paste dries naturally, it is removed from the surface with soft nylon brushes and the treated surface is washed with distilled water. The accretions are absorbed by the paste, leaving the stone surface clean. This method is non-absorbed by the paste, leaving the stone surface clean. This method is non-abrasive, non-corrosive and quite effective in the removal of adherent accretionary deposits.

References are available about the advisability and safety of using poulticing materials for marble cleaning. This method has been successfully used in U.K. and Itlay.

Greenfield airports in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh

*96. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what are the Greenfield airports being planned to be developed in different parts of the country; and

(b) whether there is any Greenfield airport proposed to be developed in the States of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) & (b) of the Rajya Sabha (*) starred Question No. 96 for answer on 04.03.2008 regarding Greenfield airports in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.

(a) Details of Greenfield airports planned to be developed are enclosed in the statement. (*See* below)

(b) The Greenfield airport at Shamshabad near Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh is likely to become operational in this month.

At present there is no proposal for any greenfield airport in Rajasthan.